



Photo by Freda Watkin

Snap Protest over EW Link 21 August 2012

ROYAL PARK PROTECTION GROUP INC. NEWS BULLETIN OCTOBER 2012

RPPG Continues the Fight against a Freeway/Tollway through Royal Park

In May this year, despite the fact there are no publicly available plans for the project, the Baillieu Government commenced stage one of construction of the East West Link. This constitutes "geological investigation" (i.e. drilling for soil and rock samples and testing for underground water) by Linking Melbourne Authority (LMA) along the proposed alignment of the above/under/on ground road way from the end of the Eastern Freeway in Hoddle Street, Clifton Hill through Fitzroy, Carlton, Parkville, including Royal Park, and Flemington and thence to CitiLink. Adam Bandt, Federal Member for Melbourne, called the first snap rally at a drill site at the end of Eastern Freeway on 18 May then on 12 June on the local park at the north-west corner of Nicholson St and Princes St. Since then, RPPG has supported and participated in snap rallies at drill sites organised by Protectors of Public Lands Victoria Inc (PPL VIC) and the Carlton Residents' Association (CRA) on 13 July on the Carlton roundabout in Cemetery Drive and then on 21 August outside the Dan O'Connell Hotel Carlton. (See the above picture with the drilling rig in the background.) On 22 September YCAT (Yarra Campaign for Action on Transport) was the chief organiser of a big rally "Trains Not Tollways" at the park on the corner of Princes and Nicholson Sts. Speakers included Greens representatives and Yarra Mayor and Councillors.

Despite the fact that the Melbourne Council voted in May last to "*oppose the Eddington East West Road Tunnel and the use or reduction of any parkland and disruption to the community*" and to "*oppose the use of parks for any works associated with an East West Road Tunnel*", permission has been given at subsequent Council meetings to LMA to drill in Royal Park. In August last RPPG and PPL VIC representatives obtained an agreement from LMA NOT to drill on the crown of the hill in the grasslands in Royal Park due to: the damage likely in dragging a drilling rig across the park; the sacrilege involved in desecrating a recognised aboriginal corroboree site; and damage to grasslands which are habitat and feeding areas of ground nesting native bird species. LMA has reneged on the agreement and now proposes to drill there. RPPG is now making representations to stop drilling here plus the grasslands south of the State Netball and Hockey Centre. We will advise when there will be another snap protest!

Other News

Return to Royal Park Project: Community groups are concerned that staff members of the City of Melbourne and Department of Health appear intent on loading up the 3.1 hectare site, once cleared of the old Royal Children's Hospital Buildings, with infrastructure and "facilities". In September last a second round of "consultations" was held by the "community engagement consultant" hired to ask the public "what do you want" on the site. Many RPPG reps made it clear that the over-riding legislation - the Royal Children's Hospital (Land) Act 2007 - states that "*parkland will be returned, as part of Royal Park*" and that the Royal Park Master Plan governs the planting of Royal Park, which is open woodland with indigenous local vegetation. Points made included the need for a barrier of indigenous vegetation around the perimeter of the site in Gatehouse St and Flemington Rd - continuing the line of eucalypt trees and understorey plantings in Gatehouse St - and acting as a noise barrier and counter to the extraordinary pollution from congested, gridlocked traffic. Also participants said that there is no need for carparking - apart from disabled spaces - on these 3 hectares of "returned" parkland. (This was confirmed by Health Minister David Davis at a community meeting.) Action on the project is on hold due to the Melbourne Council elections.

Construction of "Doyle's Dunny" at entrance to the Australian Native Garden Royal Park: Parkland at one of the main entrances of Royal Park, in the Australian Native Garden, has been damaged over the last few months. A large area of native planting in a bushland garden bed has been destroyed and a delightful winding path through the bush, much loved by children, completely blocked. This is so, a monster "Silver Tomb" (shaped like a coffin on end), 3 unit toilet block can be constructed at the ANG entrance. Branches of the 120 year old heritage peppercorn tree overhanging the toilet block site have been hacked back and the tree ruined. This has been carried out under the instructions of the Lord Mayor and the CEO who have defended their actions in numbers of letters to RPPG and PPL VIC.

Coming Events:

The Carlton Resident's Association will present a "Meet the Candidates Forum" 15 October 2012

Time: 7:30 pm. **Date:** Monday 15 October 2012.

Location: Church of All Nations, 180 Palmerston St, (cnr Drummond St) Carlton.

Transport: Church of All Nations. Melway Ref 2B G6, accessible by Swanston St Trams 1 and 8 to Elgin St, and buses on Lygon St and Rathdowne St to Elgin St. (C.A.N is a short walk from Elgin St).

Enquiries: Ian Bird, Carlton Residents' Association Email carltonresidents@gmail.com

Meeting: The Kensington Association will present a "Meet the Candidates Forum" 17 October 2012

Time: 7:30 pm. **Date:** Wednesday 17 October 2012

Location: Holy Rosary School Hall, Gower Street, Kensington.

Enquiries: Tony Dare, Kensington Association. Email: info@kensingtonassociation.org.au

Advice for Voters in City of Melbourne: The election is by postal vote only. You should have received two ballots (one for the Lord Mayor and Deputy and one for the election of 9 Councillors) between 9 and 11 October. Return ballots by 26 October. RPPG asks voters to consider supporting Kevin Chamberlin and his team in the election. He has been a RPPG supporter for many years and is an outstanding community leader.

Spring Planting in Royal Park 28 October 2012

Time: 11 am to 3 pm **Date:** Sunday 28 October 2012.

Location: Royal Park, Park Street, next to Western Oval. **Melway Reference:** 29 F10

Reminders: To be sent out closer to the date. The plantings are usually great events, geared specially for children and welcoming of all ethnic groups.

News Flash re EW Link. See letter "Historic Zoo at Risk" in Sunday Age 14 October 2012. Please write a letter for the Sunday Age commenting on this topic, send during the week. Send to sunday@theage.com.au <http://www.theage.com.au/national/letters/the-big-issue-the-state-20121013-27jxj.html#ixzz29Bdb17Sf>

Message from Paul Leitinger, RPPG Convenor: I thank members for your support. We have been in campaigns opposing the extension of the Eastern Freeway/the East West Link through Royal Park since 2000. And won! We can do it again with community backing. Please contact me on 0401 99 2000 if you see drilling rigs or any other unusual works in Royal Park. We will contact you re the next snap protest!